

CLAIMS

1. An apparatus for feeding gimmicks to a main conveyor of a conveyor line, wherein the apparatus is provided with a sliding table having at least one free side where an operator can position himself, and with at least one conveyor, the at least one conveyor being provided with
5 compartments each having such dimensions that one gimmick is receivable therein, and wherein an inlet of the at least one conveyor aligns with the sliding table.
2. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the at least one conveyor is a conveyor provided with projections, wherein a compartment is
10 formed by the space between two successive projections.
3. An apparatus according to claim 1 or 2, wherein at least four parallel conveyors are provided which are each drivable independently of each other.
4. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims,
15 wherein in the or each conveyor, in the active, upwardly facing part, 8-15 compartments are situated.
5. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein downstream of the discharge end of the or each conveyor a receiving pocket is provided in which a gimmick is receivable, the receiving
20 pocket being provided with delivery means which are arranged for delivering the gimmick from the pocket to the conveyor line at a desired time.
6. An apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the delivery means comprise a bottom of the pocket which can be released.
- 25 7. An apparatus according to claim 5 or 6, wherein the delivery means comprise a pusher by means of which the gimmick is actively pushed onto the conveyor line.

8. An apparatus according to claim 6 or 7, wherein the releasable bottom of the pocket comprises a flexible diaphragm which opens automatically under the influence of the force exerted by the pusher on the gimmick.

5 9. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the apparatus is provided with a control, wherein adjacent the discharge end of the or each conveyor a sensor is disposed which is arranged for sensing the presence and/or absence of a gimmick in a compartment of the respective conveyor situated near the discharge end, or, if present, in
10 the receiving pocket belonging to the respective conveyor, the control being arranged for driving the respective conveyor until said compartment and/or the receiving pocket possibly present is filled with a gimmick, such that in each case a gimmick is ready for delivery.

10. An apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the sensor is an
15 electronic eye.

11. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the apparatus is provided with a control, the control being connected to an encoder which produces signals that are indicative of the position of the main conveyor in the conveyor line.

20 12. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the or each conveyor is provided with a warning light which burns when the conveyor starts to move or moves.

13. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the conveyors are driven intermittently, wherein the conveyors at
25 each driving event are moved forward at least one compartment, while a driving event occurs every 2-6 seconds, more particularly every 4 seconds, per conveyor.

14. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the apparatus is provided with an adjusting button by means of
30 which the time of delivery of a gimmick to the main conveyor is settable,

such that the delivery position of the gimmick in the conveying direction of the main conveyor is settable.

15. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein at least the position of the discharge end of the at least one
5 conveyor transverse to the conveying direction of the main conveyor is settable relative to the main conveyor.

16. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the delivery capacity of the apparatus is in the range of 3,000-8,000 gimmicks per hour, more particularly about 6,000 gimmicks per hour.

10 17. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the width of a compartment is in the range of 80-300 mm and wherein the length of a compartment is in the range of 80-300 mm.